Site dedie au trompettiste Maurice ANDRE, french trumpet player, piccolo trumpet

maurice-andre.fr/piccoloengl.html

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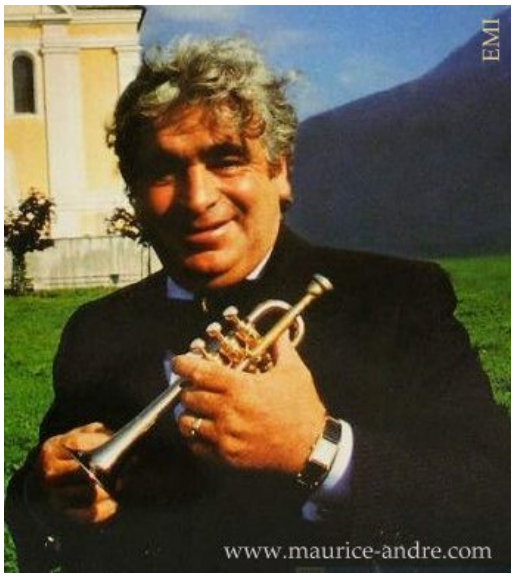
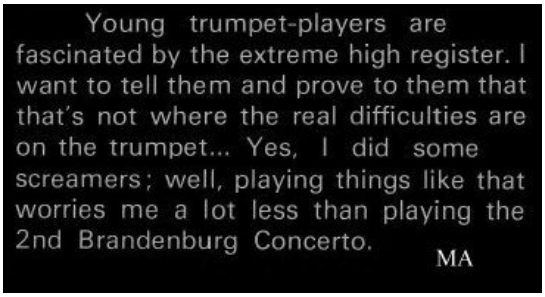
Maurice André and the piccolo trumpet

"The success of my life..."

Maurice André




Young trumpet-players are fascinated by the extreme high register. I want to tell them and prove to them that that's not where the real difficulties are on the trumpet... Yes, I did some screamers; well, playing things like that worries me a lot less than playing the 2nd Brandenburg Concerto.
MA

Maurice ANDRE, the father of the piccolo trumpet

By Jan LEONTSKY

Maurice André once spoke about the piccolo trumpet as "the success of his life"... It is definitely true.

It would be impossible to speak about master Maurice André and not to make a special part devoted to the piccolo trumpet. As a matter of fact, it was the Master himself who worked with Selmer to develop a completely new trumpet, based on a german model (according to Maurice's own testimony). After many technical improvements, Maurice played the piccolo for more than a quarter of a century. It was in 1959 that Selmer made this strange instrument (originally with 3 valves only) for which nobody knew any repertoire. In the following years, many technical improvements have been made (the 4th valve was added in 1967) in close collaboration with Maurice André.

Maurice was introduced to Selmer Company by his teacher Raymond Sabarich and started working on this piccolo trumpet project. Michel Wykrykacz, Selmer's prototypes department director remembers

:

" Maurice André has been greatly involved in all the process of making this new trumpet. He wanted to improve the quality of its sound and also the ergonomic of the instrument. Maurice André very much liked to work at home on technical improvements and to try out new things. Together, we worked a lot on leadpipes. When he used to come in the morning, he would play a few notes and we were all impressed... All was perfect at once."

If Adolf Scherbaum had been an idol for the young Maurice, it is our great french trumpet player that developed the piccolo trumpet repertoire. He played this instrument much more than the standard trumpets. Maurice André has been, above all, the master of the piccolo trumpet. After the Munich's competition (1963) Maurice André recorded many albums with the greatest german

conductors : Böhm, Münchinger, Karajan and mainly the Münchener Bach-Choir conducted by the great Karl Richter. It is this new "invention" - the piccolo trumpet - that Maurice played on all these baroque repertoire. If we consider all Maurice's recordings, it is clear that the piccolo takes the first place. He's the real father of the piccolo trumpet. Let's now have a closer, more historical look on the trumpet repertoire.

Rehearsal Karl Richter - 1964

"When I began my career, people hardly knew Telemann or Vivaldi..." Maurice André

Except for some concerti, a few baroque works and the orchestral parts of Bach, there were few serious music pieces to be played for the young Maurice André when he was studying the big trumpet with Sabarich at the Paris' Conservatory. The trumpet repertoire was small at this time. The classical period left us the Haydn and Hummel concerti, real masterpieces. Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert or Schumann did not write any trumpet concerti, or sonatas for the solo trumpet. The Nineteenth century gave us orchestral parts for the trumpet but no real solo repertoire. Therefore, we can say that, before Adolf Scherbaum, the solo trumpet repertoire was very small.
The great contribution of Scherbaum was to re-discover the baroque repertoire through a real new instrument : his little Bb piccolo trumpet. With his trumpet, he has been able to play forgotten baroque pieces (written in the clarino register - high register) that nobody could play at this time with the big trumpet.

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The famous little Bb trumpet of Adolf Scherbaum, made by Kurt Scherzer

*(Note the phony tube of this instrument, only for aesthetic)

Scherbaum was famous for his interpretation of the 2nd Brandenburg concerto (he performed it over 400 times and recorded it 14 times). He recorded also many new baroque pieces, as shown in this list. But Adolf Scherbaum was born in 1909. When Maurice won the decisive Munich

competition, Scherbaum was 54 years old. There were 24 years between Maurice André and Adolf Scherbaum....One generation.
It is therefore Maurice André that endorsed this completely new repertoire and followed Scherbaum to develop piccolo trumpet playing into perfection.

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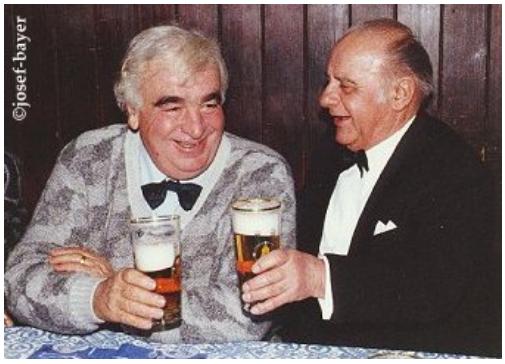
A secret of the Master : searching for the quality of the attacks while working on intervals...



Maurice André with his precursor, Adolf Scherbaum

It was Maurice André that made piccolo trumpet music into a completely new and unique repertoire. He has been an incredible pioneer with his new and unique instrument in his hands. He developed this repertoire from transcriptions and forgotten baroque works, for many works were known but nobody could technically play them. With the piccolo trumpet, everything was possible. The great arranger Jean Thilde (Billaudot), who worked for years on all these gorgeous transcriptions, must also be mentioned.

*

(MODELE 360 B)

It is through the will of Maurice André that the piccolo trumpet entered into the musical world. By his energy, his curiosity, he has raised this little, unknown instrument to the rank of the most well-known. If Scherbaum has shown the way, it is Maurice André who has accomplished this idea of giving a new repertoire to a new instrument. Even today, nobody plays the piccolo trumpet as Maurice did.
Such perfection seems to be unique in all music history...until now.

*

I will add that, if Maurice André played the piccolo trumpet so long - and almost only this instrument - all along his career, this is due to technical reasons. The piccolo trumpet is not a big trumpet that would play high notes. It is a definitely unique instrument. The soloist, the real professional players, cannot go from the piccolo to the big trumpet, and vice-versa - all the time without great difficulties or even danger. Playing the piccolo requires a most special pressure, phrasing and tonguing. Piccolo trumpet is a great demanding instrument. The professional

player - Scherbaum is also the proof of that - can only specialize in this peculiar instrument to reach the flawlessness, the perfect musical results and, above all, the musicality, without which there is no Music but only notes...

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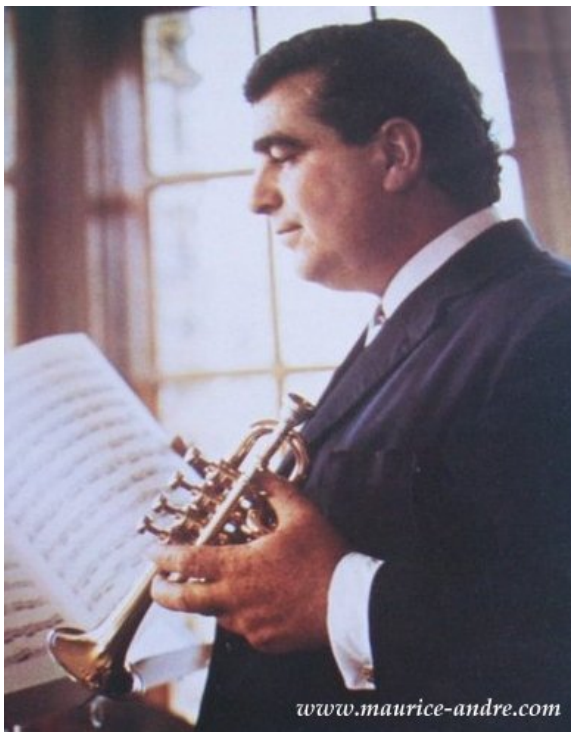

(MODEL 360 BL)*

*

Selmer Sib-La. 1960.

Such model - 360B type - has accompanied Maurice André through over 15 years.

"Of course, the piccolo trumpet helped me greatly, but you also need iron-lips"

See large pictures of this model

MP3 - Samples

Piccolo tpt & Organ (Marie-Claire ALAIN)

T.Albinoni*. Sonate Remin/Dmin - Allegro*

G-F Handel*. Sonate en La/in A - Andante*

G-F Handel*. Sonate en Fa/in F - Allegro*

T.Albinoni*. Concerto en Fa/in F - Allegro*

ERATO. 1969-1970

*

Scherbaum vs. André...

The amazing high register of Adolf Scherbaum brought him to specialize in the baroque repertoire (clarino register) through a new little trumpet. Adolf Scherbaum was, for this period, a phenomenon of the high notes. i For example, in the perilous concerto of Michael Haydn, he climbs until the high- A. Nevertheless, Scherbaum has not the fineness, the musical elegance of Maurice André. Mainly, he hasn't Maurice's incredibly "round" sound. Was the sound of Scherbaum linked to his instrument ? Yes, no doubt. It is undeniable that the Scherzer piccolo trumpet of Scherbaum was a rudimentary instrument (compared to the 1967 Selmer). This instrument was capricious (as intonation is concerned) and it rendered also poor harmonics in low notes. Even Scherbaum's mouthpiece (a very shallow cup) contributed to this poorness in the low notes.

Even if, in the Brandenburg, Scherbaum excelled by his flawlessness and his admirable tonguing, Maurice André surpassed him by the splendid musicality he put in this most difficult concerto (as well as in all his interpretations). If Maurice said : "Scherbaum was my only predecessor and one of my idols", it remains that our French trumpet player quickly imposed his amazing piccolo trumpet playing, by far superior to Scherbaum's technique and musicality.

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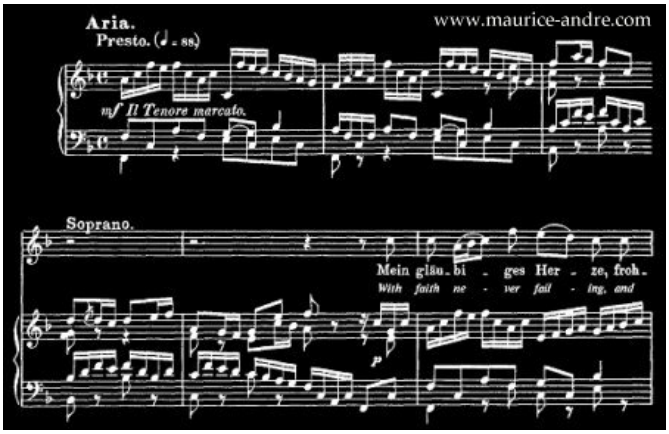
Listen to the Badinerie from the B minor orchestral suite. Arranger : JM Defaye. Maurice André - Piccolo in A.

"Many young players have technique and sound but sometimes they lack musicality"

.....Maurice André

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Aria.
Presto. (♩ = 88)
www.maurice-andre.com
mf Il Tenore marcato.
Soprano.
Mein gläu - bi - ges Her - ze, froh -
With faith ne - ver fail - ing, and

Listen on Youtube Maurice André playing the Aria - Mein gläubiges Herze - from cantata Bwv 68. Selmer piccolo trumpet in Bb. Admirable tonguing in the high notes (high-F), perfection of sound and technique...
The flawless art of a genius of the interpretation, as Jascha Heifetz or Sviatoslav Richter.

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From the beginning, the piccolo trumpet has been linked to baroque repertoire, since this was re-discovered by this instrument. Yet, after Maurice André's huge impact, piccolo's repertoire is not developing anymore. No sonatas, no concerti. Only some parts are played by the piccolo, as it was the case in the baroque orchestral works. The most famous "passage" written for piccolo trumpet is Penny Lane*. After that comes the "Badinerie" from BWV 1067 orchestral suite, transcribed from the flute, and played by Maurice in a miraculous way, with all the musicality of a true genius of interpretation.

Piccolo trumpet is not like a high playing big trumpet. It is a complete new instrument. I do hope that young piccolo trumpet players will ask contemporary composers to write music for this magic instrument. I do hope young players will have the same faith that Maurice André had in his career. This way piccolo trumpet will keep on living.

* Technical note on Penny Lane : Played by David Mason (see video on Youtube) the piccolo trumpet part of Penny Lane was written by Paul Mc-Cartney after having heard and seen the 2nd Brandenburg concerto played on BBC TV. The part is written in B major and played on the A piccolo trumpet (D major). It is interesting to note that David Mason, in the first part of the video, plays the final of the Brandenburg tuned in Bb and after that, changed the tuning to put his piccolo in A and play Penny Lane.

For Maurice, it was the beauty of the sound that was the heart of the trumpet. The beauty of the sound and the musicality.

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(SCHERZER ROTARY MODEL)

See main piccolo trumpet mouthpieces

Piccolo mouthpiece created by my friend **Rudi Stuber** *(UCSB)*

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A comparative chart of main piccolo trumpet models regarding bore parameter

MODELES DE TROMPETTES PICCOLO Piccolo trumpet models	*	PERCE inch BORE	PERCE cm BORE
BACH 196		0.401	10.18
Yamaha 6810		0.413	10.49
SELMER 365		0.416	10.56
Winston 920		0.417	10.59
Getzen Eterna		0.42	10.66
Benge 4P		0.421	10.69
SCHILKE P5-4		0.45	11.43
Besson 60		0.46	11.68
Kanstul 920		0.46	11.68
B&S Chall.		0.465	11.81
Courtois 122		0.465	11.81

* Diamètre de Perce (forme intérieure du tuyau de la trompette)

www.maurice-andre.com

Maurice Andre's piccolo mouthpieces

Bach 7 DW
Bach 7 DW

For the high pieces(Brandenburg No. 2) Selmer 1 mouthpiece
(Source : Louis Davidson)

(As the big trumpet is concerned, Maurice played a very long time Bach 1 1/2 C but with specific flattened rims.Maurice

like flat rims. He also work with Selmer on a special mouthpiece with a slightly wider upper rim. He said that changing one's mouthpiece

was very dangerous, anyway.)

Yet, mastery and musicality do not lay in a piece of copper like a trumpet, a leadpipe or a mouthpiece.

"For the most part, you must practice (big & piccolo tpt) in the
dynamics p or mf to construct your playing
with calm and to control effectively
what you're doing." M.A

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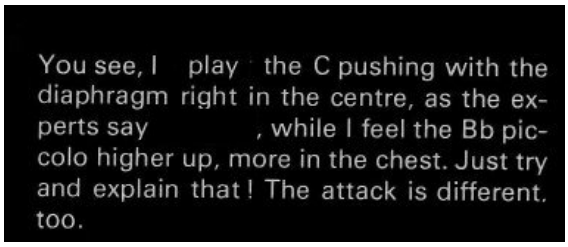
Maurice has never occupied himself a lot with equipment questions : trumpets, mouthpieces, leadpipes, etc...
The physical parameters in trumpet playing were not essential to him. Only daily work, performances and recordings made his career.

He used to think that other trumpet players did not work as much as he did. and therefore did not get the same results.

The technique training of Maurice was : to work on all kinds of articulations, for hours. He always chose
training exercises accordingly to his various concert programmes : an hard concert = a soft training, and vice-versa.
He did not play all the time the same execises.

As warming up is concerned, he used to play slurs, chromatic scales, everything that won't damage
the lips. He used to massage his upper lip (not the lower) every evening with the "indian skin cream".

"This massage is a tremendous help", he said.


You see, I play the C pushing with the
diaphragm right in the centre, as the ex-
perts say , while I feel the Bb pic-
colo higher up, more in the chest. Just try
and explain that ! The attack is different,
too.

MA

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Listen via Youtube to Maurice playing a boldy arrangement (in F major) of the Concerto in E major for harpsichord,
strings and continuo, BWV 1053.
Eight minutes of an amazing performance played on the Bb piccolo tpt.

"Try to work always mezza voce, as Arban taught." M.A

Maurice Andre's daily warm-up
(Thanks to my friend Ole J. Utnes for this quotation)

1) I waken up the muscles and the lips with buzzing exercises and with the mouthpiece alone,
taking care to use no pressure on the lips (I don't worry about the sound at all!)

2)I move on to the instrument with scale and arpeggio exercises, still very lightly,
without pressing and still without worrying about the sound.

3) I start chord arpeggios over again, but this time looking for good sound.
I insist on flexibility, working as slowly as possible. Next I go on to wider
and wider intervals (fourths, fifths, single, double and triple octaves),
still very slow and pressing as little as possible.

4)I do no. 3) again staccato.

When that's done, I can go on (for however long it takes) to my concert programme.
I also practise changing instruments and mouthpieces.
Every night, before going to bed, I conscientiously massage my lip muscles with butter,
which is rich in vitamin E.
For me the main things in trumpet playing are looking for
the right sound and a precise attack.

(Srce. Brass Bulletin.)

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Albinoni - Vidéo

As a great admirer of Marcel PROUST, I found in Sodom and Gomorrah this passage which proves that the piccolo trumpet was already a well known instrument at the very beginning of the 20th century :

"There are times when, to paint a complete portrait of someone, we should have to add a phonetic imitation to our verbal description, and our portrait of the figure that M. de Charlus presented is liable to remain incomplete in the absence of that little laugh, so delicate, so light, just as certain works of Bach are never accurately rendered because our orchestras lack these small, high trumpets, with a sound so entirely their own, for which the composer wrote this or that part."

"Piccolo Trumpet Lamp"

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How to transpose on the Bb & A piccolo trumpet (in french)

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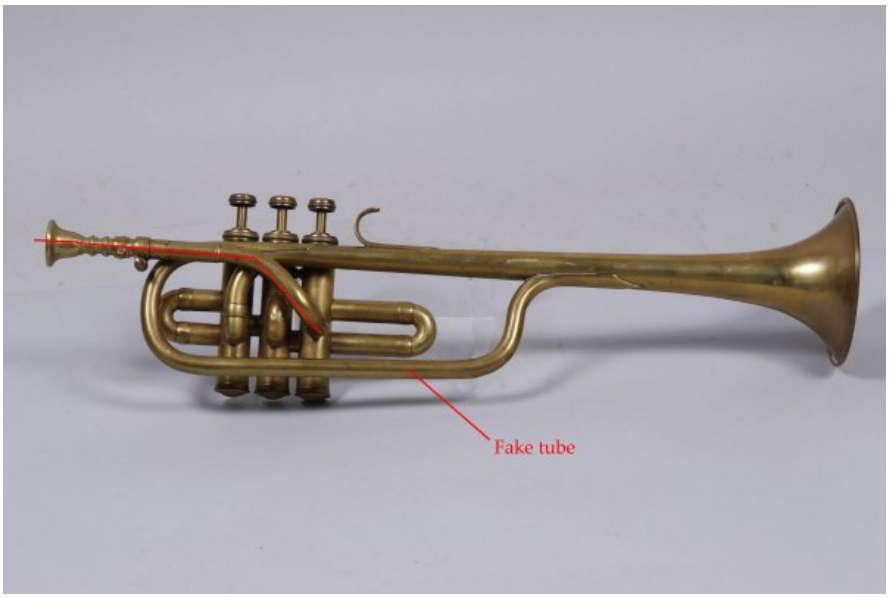
A very rare and interesting Bb piccolo by Couesnon, early XXth century : The Monopole Conservatoire (n°23897)

Technical innovation used to be a great tradition in France. But Japan & China - with their "low-price" policy - killed all our craftsmanship.

Simply because people wanted to pay less money... Now, they get what they pay for :) No more.



See the main intake Branch, directly connected to the 3d valve case.

The uncommon fake tube.

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Gottfried Reiche, and his Tromba da caccia

Piccolo trumpet and Natural trumpet

As we all know, the repertoire of the Natural trumpet, a baroque trumpet without holes ("évents", in french), with its high register, called "clarino", is the direct ancestor of the Piccolo trumpet. The great pioneer of the Natural trumpet repertoire was Gottfried Reiche (1667-1734), for whom BACH wrote, in his cantatas of Leipzig, most of these first trumpet flamboyant

parts. Reiche died, moreover, the day following a concert, victim of "an attack, which occurred after he had played the cantata BWV 215, on October 5, 1734" *.

Technically speaking, and to make things clear, the natural trumpet is exactly like a cavalry trumpet or even a hunting horn. It's an instrument that uses the natural harmonics of a fundamental sound. The more you go to the high register (following the natural succession of harmonics) the more notes you can play. So, in the high register, you can play real melodies: this is the specific register of this instrument, called "clarino"..

It is the english baroque vogue (in fact, initiated by Antoine Geoffroy-Dechaume) which has brought up to date this forgotten instrument. It's been the same for the viola (viola da gamba), an instrument which was once much more famous than the violin (used as an instrument to make people dance). Total reversal of situation which changes a plebeian instrument into an aristocratic one. More generally, regarding these "baroque" instruments, this return to instruments which, in terms of instrumental craftsmanship, are very archaic compared to ours, seems quite ironic. But it is a fashion of our times and, de gustibus non est disputandum ... it is useless to discuss about tastes !

Maurice André knew about the Natural trumpet but it seems he's been to much involved in the piccolo trumpet playing. Therefore, it is hard to say if he would have been interested in this instrument or not (as Alison Balsom does today - the gravy train). Anyway, we have, in France, the master of the natural trumpet : Jean-François Madeuf. He is the great representative of the baroque trumpet, the real one! Because, as I already wrote, the natural trumpet has no holes (these holes which allow the air column's length to vary, changing the notes). There are other well-known baroque trumpet players, such as Edward Tarr (who died in March 2020) or Friedemann Immer ... But they use the holes to get some notes an easier way ... Jean-François Madeuf, does not. And here is the great "tour de force" of our time:
"Low hats, gentlemen!" as Schumann said, speaking about Chopin.
By listening to the master Jean-François Madeuf, we are in direct contact with Gottfried Reiche ... No more, no less.

This is no small thing.

* Excerpt from the novel "The Emperor of Messina" by Renato Cippù. *

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